ON COURSE AND PADDOCK

Racing Season Opens This Week in Real Earnest.

TURF'S POSITION IS NOW ASSURED.

Under Certain Limitations That Are Now Clearly Defined, It Is No Offence to Back Your Opinion.

A week hence the gates will be thrown open at the handsome Morris Park race course, and a season of sport, which promises to be brilliant, will be in full swing. To-morrow Aqueduct, swept by cool Jamaica Bay breezes, too cool, perhaps, for early Spring days, opens for a week, a sort of preliminary canter, as it were, to the more pretentious opening at Westchester.

At the former course improvements have been under way for some time, and visitors will no doubt find that their comfort and convenience will be looked after in more thorough fashion than last year. Those who make the journey to Aqueduct, however, may be disappointed if they expect any wonderful transformation in the appearance of the course and appointments. President Reilly and his associates have had but little time at their disposal in which to effect desired changes, and if they have succeeded in completing a more convenient arrangement of the grand stand, paddock and enclosure, that will no doubt be as much as race-goers can expect at present.

The beginning of the season is peculiar in one way. There has been a right-face-about from the old routine. For several years past the season has been ushered in at Gravesend with the running of the Brooklyn Handicap about the middle of May. Thence the horses were transferred to Morris Park, then back seaward again to Sheepshead Bay. The change to Morris Park for the opening is a convenience to trainers and owners, and one which, in any event, can make no material difference to the public.

BOOM DAYS HAVE DEPARTED.

On the threshold of the season it may not be amiss to take stock of the outlook. And the more one pauses to consider, the more he can find it encouraging. Idle it would be to consider the prospect from the point of view of the effervescent Western boomer. Boom days in racing are out of date, for a time, at least. They vanished with the passing of the bookmaker. But it is consoling to know that booms are always reactionary, and in racing, as in other affairs, when prices are carried for- [illegible] wave of unnatural stimulation, there is bound to be a drop some time, twift, sudden and sure, as we often see it in railroad, mining stock stock, etc., and as we witnessed it a year ago on the turf.

In racing it must be confessed that the drop came hard—tremendously hard—so hard, in fact, that the entire turf fabric landed on bedrock with a resounding thump. But once a sure foundation was reached it was reasonable to hope that a healthy development might follow. Such, in my estimation, at least, is the case.

The Constitutional Convention builded wiser than it knew. It destroyed, root and branch, the poisonous fungus which had been eating out the vitals of racing, and placed the sport at once on a basis where the Legislature could go on and protect it, by judicious enactments, as has been done in the Percy-Gray, Wilds, and Austin bills.

WHERE THE CREDIT IS DUE.

If I were to accord full credit to Mr. Belmont and his collaborators in the Jockey Club for all that has been accomplished in behalf of the turf in one short year, I might lay myself open to criticism on the part of enemies of the sport. Yet it is impossible to overlook the fact that under the able and judicious guidance of these gentlemen racing interests have won at every point. The hitherto victorious Peter De Lacy was routed ignominiously—beaten so absolutely that his forces may never again be rallied. The constitutionality of the racing laws has been upheld in three courts, with only one possible appeal from these decisions. The rights of race-goers, under the new laws, have been defined. It has been decided by high authority—the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court—that certain prescribed forms of betting are legal. And so, when one fully appreciates the issues that had to be confronted, he can well realize that credit is due somewhere. Racing has not earned its victories by mere chance.

This naturally leads up to the consideration of a feature that is of interest to a portion, at least, of the race-going public; namely, what is to be the status of betting this year? Many people believed that the Jockey Club last season was unnecessarily conservative with regard to the observance of the clause in the Percy-Gray and Wilds bills relating to betting. But the fiat went forth: "No money must change hands at the race courses," and it was adhered to.

There appeared to be no room for doubt that the wording of the racing bills was such as would permit, under certain conditions, the passing of money.

LAWS RELATING TO BETTING.

For example, Section 14 of the Wilds bill provides a penalty for betting, as follows: "He (the person who bets) shall forfeit the value of any bet or wager of money, property or thing of value upon the result of any trial or contest of skill, or speed, or power of endurance of man or beast. * * * He shall forfeit the value of the money or property so wagered, received or held by him, to be recovered in a civil action by the person or persons with whom such wager is made, or by whom such money or property is deposited. This penalty is exclusive and in place of all penalties or punishments contemplated or prescribed by any other provision of this act, or by any other act."

The Percy-Gray bill covers the ground in practically the same language, with the following addition: "Except in case of the exchange or transfer of a record or register, memorandum, token, paper, or document of any kind whatever, as evidence of any such bet or wager."

It would thus seem clear that bets, e[illegible] where money is placed in the hands of the party with whom the bet is made, providing no record of the transaction is exchanged, are entirely legal. To illustrate and to convey the idea briefly, suppose a backer desires to bet $10 on Buckrene with Mr. Smith, layer of odds, to whom he is unknown. He deposits his money with Smith's clerk, and if he wins, continues to bet against his credit, settling the transaction at some future time and place. This would seem to be strictly legal, so long as no record of the bet had been exchanged.

In the recent decision of the Appellate Division in the cases of Lawrence and Sturgis (written) by Mr. Justice Rumsey, this matter of betting, in relation to the Constitutional Amendment, is gone into at some length. The Justice holds that it was not the intention of the Constitutional Convention to prohibit all form of betting, indeed that it would be both impracticable and undesirable to do so. From all this, it may be safe to assume that the betting problem is in a fair way to a satisfactory solution, a point which may be regarded as another harbinger of a successful racing year.

S. B. WEEMS.

SPECIAL NEWS RELATING TO HORSES AND HORSEMEN.

Track and Boulevard.

It turns out that Fantasy (2:06) did meet with an accident in training at Selma, Ala., but it was not nearly as serious as at first reported, and she is now said to be all right again.

The experienced California horseman and writer, Joseph Cairn Simpson, thinks that if the Palo Alto Stable comes East this season in Dustin's charge, Adbell (2:23), the yearling champion, now a three-year-old, and Palita (2:16), at two years old, sister to Rio Alto (2:19¼), owned by E. D. Slater, New York, will play an important part in the races for their classes. Mr. Simpson believes Palita good enough to win the Kentucky Futurity.

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The Maplehurst Stable of Colonel John E. Thayer, of Boston, will probably open the season's campaign at Middletown, N. Y. The horses in the string are youngsters, by Ralph Wilkes (2:06¾) and Electricity (2:17¾).

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A Boston correspondent writes: "New England horsemen received the Journal announcement of its proposed horse page with much satisfaction."

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The winnings of the Village Farm Stable on the trotting turf have averaged nearly $60,000 a year for the past five years.

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The trotting record of Australia is now 2:14 1-5, and is held by the gelding Fritz, an Australian by birth and an American in blood. His sire and dam were nurtured in the blue grass country.

* * *

"Harness prosperity," says the experienced writer and campaigner, Allen Lowe, "never looked better, for the class of men connected with the business is steadily improving and the principle of winning with the best horse is better recognized."

* * *

The annual meeting of the stockholders of the Belmont Driving Club, Philadelphia, will be held at the clubhouse, Thursday, May 7, when the following "slate," which has been placed in nomination, will no doubt be elected: For president, William M. Singerly; for vice-president, Gus. A. Muller; for directors, William H. H. Achuff, Albert Baltz, William M. Bunn, John Condon, A. L. Grant, Jacob Justice, Joshua Evans, Thomas F. Small, Robert Steel, John T. Strickland and J. Howard Supplee.

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The total amount of stakes now announced by New England trotting associations aggregate $200,000, and this total is made up by the stakes of about a dozen different associations.

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The following stakes have been decided upon by the directors of the Kentucky Association of Trotting Horse Breeders for the annual October meeting: Kentucky Futurity, for three-year-olds, $25,000; Kentucky Futurity, for two-year-olds, $5,000; Kentucky Futurity, for three-year-olds, pacing, $1,250; Transylvania Stake, all ages, $5,000; Ashland Stakes, 2:11 trotters, all ages, $4,000; Tennessee Stakes, 2:09 pacers, all ages, $4,000; West, 2:29 class trotting, $2,000; Johnson, 2:24 class trotting, $2,000; Blue Grass, 2:19 class trotting, $2,000; Wilson, 2:20 class pacing, $2,000; Kentucky, three-year-old trotting, $2,000; Lexington, two-year-olds, trotting, $2,000.

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Carll Burr, Jr., has begun working H. O. Havemeyer's trotters at the Burr farm track at Comac, L. I. They include Harrietta (2:09¾), Charley C. (2:14½), Lena Wilkes (2:09), Miss Lida (2:19¾), Double Cross (2:18¾), and Merrivale, by Alcantara.

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The Bostonians are after the "fastest track" honors in earnest. They claim that the new track of the New England Breeders' Association at Readville, which will represent an investment of nearly $250,000, will be the fastest mile track in the United States, and that the new combination park will ask no odds of any half-mile course in Uncle Sam's domain.

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A $4,000 stake for 2:11 trotters has been added to the October programme of the Kentucky Breeders' Association.

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The Eastern trotter, The Seer (2:15¾), has been changed to pace, and will be out as a sidewheeler in 1896.

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H. B. Scannell has decided to open a public training stable at the Readville, Mass., new track.

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C. H. Pettingill, the well-known Western starter, was a visitor at Pasig & Co.'s Madison Square Garden sale last week. Like many of our best-known racing men, Mr. Pettingill graduated from the trotting school. He still retains his old love for the road nags and, moreover, he knows a good goer when he sees one. Mr. Pettingill went down to Washington a few days ago with a special view to inspecting the starting machine in operation there. He believes in the starting machine idea, and despite adverse criticism says he will try an automatic device at Aqueduct, where he will handle the flag before leaving for the West to fulfil his season engagements.

Mr. Pettingill began his career as a starter at Gloucester, in the old days of Winter racing. It was a rough and ready school, and "Pet," as he was known, adopted methods of discipline in keeping with his surroundings, of which the writer retains vivid memories dating from one or two brief visits to the Sound race track. At that time Mr. Pettingill had to deal with inexperienced riders for the most part. They were a vicious lot, and he believed, perhaps rightly, that corporal punishment was more effective than the infliction of mere fines. This style of discipline certainly commanded some respect, for Pettingill was, among the boys, at any rate, the most feared official of the Gloucester race track.

The one vulnerable point in Pettingill's career as a starter is the interminable delay at the post in the Chicago Derby of 1893. Speaking of this he said: "It's an old story now, but I felt then, and I have always felt since, that the delay was largely due to inadequate police protection. The people crowded about the starting post in such numbers that the horses became nervous and unmanageable. Early in the day I reminded Secretary Brewster that special police provision should be made for the Derby start, but for some reason or other the matter was overlooked. By this I do not mean to be understood as desiring to shift the blame entirely from my own shoulders, but at the same time the occurrence was due to peculiar circumstances over which I did not have entire control."

COACHING AND WESTERN STAGING.

Two Distinct Styles of Driving and Equipment, but Each Demands an Expert Exponent to Show It at Its Best.

While to many the words "coaching" and "staging" seem almost synonymous, there is, in reality, a considerable difference between the two. The word "coaching," in its generally accepted sense at present, applies to the sport of four-in-hand driving to a coach or drag, while the word "staging" applies to the more serious business of transferring passengers and mails by road where there are no railways. Coaching in this country has had scarcely a quarter of a century of life, and the warm thanks of its admirers are due to a few gentlemen, well known in coaching circles to-day, who first brought it into existence.

Ten years ago one could name the owner of almost every drag then running from its colors alone, but to-day there are so many in all parts of the country that the builders can only identify their own handiwork by numbers. This is good evidence of the growth of a healthy, manly and, one may say, generous sport; generous because it not only is a source of pleasure to the individual, but to his friends as well.

While there are a great many persons who take pleasure in driving four-in-hand in a hap-hazard sort of way, there is, fortunately, an ever increasing number of those who have graduated from this embryo stage, and who realize that there is more in what they are pleased to term "frills" than they had at first supposed.

They find that a coach is very like a drag in general appearance, but that there is a difference, and, in a short time they ascertain where the difference lies. Thereupon they assume a superior air, and inform their less fortunate friends that the word "drag" can only be applied to the highest type of a sporting vehicle, "a gentleman's private four-in-hand coach." Up to this time they have probably applied the word indiscriminately to all sorts and conditions of four-in-hand vehicles.

Either "drag" or "tally-ho" seems to be the favorite term applied to the four-in-hand trap at large by the populace, and both without any particular reference to the vehicle in question. The term "tally-ho" is the most sadly misused, however, and few realize its origin. Some twenty years since a gentleman, whom we may designate as the father of coaching in this country, put on the first properly appointed road coach, which started from the Brunswick Hotel. This coach was advertised under its own name, the "Tally-Ho." Ever since those days the small boy, on seeing a four-in-hand, has exclaimed, "Here comes a 'tally-ho!'" How much the father of coaching has to be responsible for!

The proper designation and the many minutiæ essential to the finished turning out of a coach or drag, become to the enthusiast quite an interesting study. Practicality and utility are the two points uppermost in the good coachman's mind, and it is his endeavor to have a sound reason for each and every one of his appointments.

The turning out and driving of a park drag is amusing, but there is no branch of the sport from which the zealot can derive as much pleasure and experience as he can from the regular driving of a well-appointed road coach. The necessity for the observance of a time schedule adds considerable zest to the game, for it is surprising how hard it is to make time in all kinds of weather with a heavily loaded coach. To be late or early at one's destination is considered a breach of etiquette, and to overdo one's horses is bad coachmanship.

Most well-known coachmen will hesitate to take a road coach out for the whole trip unless they are in excellent practice and condition, but we see many a tyro who would undertake the task with the most perfect effrontery and without the slightest hesitation. Where a road coach is run by men of experience, it is customary not to entrust the driving even of a single stage to a passenger, unless he is known to have been a regular coachman on some public coach.

A number of road coaches have been run out of New York during the past few years, and almost without exception their coachmen have put in from four to five weeks of preliminary driving. In this way they become familiar with the dispositions of their horses and also prepare their muscles for the exertion required in a day's drive with several changes.

Experience has taught us that the school of driving in vogue in England, during and since the old stage coach days, is the best adapted to the work which is required on the crowded thoroughfares of our cities, and the fairly well built country roads in their vicinity. Not only are the methods thoroughly practical, but they admit of great finish in execution. The close "coupling" and "poling up," together with careful bitting, make it possible for an adept to handle a four with apparently little effort, or, in other words, to drive artistically.

STAGING IN THE WEST.

There is another school, however, which is equally deserving of notice because of its practicality, namely, that of the Western stage driver. In the early days of staging in the mountainous sections of California, Nevada, Colorado, etc., the roads were scarcely deserving of the title, in consequence of which a style of harnessing and driving was adopted which suited the exigencies of the situation. At a later period this style was developed into what was practically a school, by such prominent whips as Guy Faust, Hank Monk and other celebrated stage drivers.

It was quite the proper thing for these men to gallop their six and eight horse stages, drawn by half-broken horses, over roads which would be impassable to one of our modern road coaches, thereby showing an unusual degree of skill and nerve.

Of course for such roads the horses are quite loosely put to, and the stage is generally hung on thorough brace leathers, thus insuring a great amount of freedom and play when the wheels come into contact with the stumps, rocks and chuck holes in which the roads abound. The first mentioned system of driving is almost valueless under these conditions, while the Western or California method, though not graceful or smart, accomplishes the result. For such reasons as these it is bad taste for the good exponent of either school to think there is no way but his own.

A CALIFORNIA EXPERIENCE.

Apropos of the California roads, the recital of a little incident in my personal experience may not be amiss. Some years ago there was a daily line of stages running between the city of Santa Barbara and the railway station at Newhall, a distance of about ninety miles. Having had occasion to drive this road quite often I knew its dangers, and when I found myself suddenly summoned to New York and obliged to leave Santa Barbara by the stage at 7 o'clock on a dark, stormy evening in February, I did not feel in the most cheerful frame of mind. The stage carried but one passenger besides myself and quite a heavy mail, most of which was stowed in the hind boot.

At a point about seventeen miles from Santa Barbara the mountains slope sharply down to the very edge of the sea, forcing one to drive some two miles directly on the beach. In fair weather this is quite an attractive feature, the fine sea sand making a capital road. At high tide in a storm, however, the scene is entirely changed, for one is then forced to drive close to the cliffs, which are edged with rocks of various sizes, rounded by the action of the sea. When storm tides are at their highest this passage is cut off, for the waves break nearly up on the lofty cliffs themselves.

On the night in question we met the up coach about a mile short of this spot. Our driver called out "How's the beach, Bill?" To which Bill answered, "It's h——, and the tide's a-risin', and will rise for more'n an hour." Not being to any great extent encouraged by this remark we pulled up on reaching the beach, and the driver and I discussed the pros and cons. Conversation was not easy, for we found the wildest kind of surf breaking close up to the cliffs, in an almost deafening roar. The shrieking and moaning of the wind combined to make one think of a violin accompanied by a violoncello.

DRIVING IN A STORMY SURF.

Altogether the prospect was unalluring. We finally decided that as Bill had gotten through with his stage but half an hour before it would not do for us to show the white feather, besides which, waiting meant at least three additional hours in the rain, for there was no shelter at hand. So we made a virtue of necessity and plunged ahead. We accomplished the first half-mile quite successfully, the coach bumping and lurching over boulders in a manner decidedly alarming to a timid person.

The rest of the distance was a very different story. The dim light of the coach lamp showed us the surf breaking against the cliffs in front of us. To go back was now out of the question, while to go forward seemed impossible. By the mercy of Providence we got through, but it was a close call. We could just see the white line of the incoming waves and had to make our progress at a walk as each receded. Time and time again our horses were carried off their feet by the force of the waves, the slippery rocks giving very uncertain footing. The mail bags were washed off the hind boot and the seas dashed completely through the inside of the coach. Had we been half an hour later we would to a certainty have been either carried out to sea by the undertow or ground to pieces against the rocks, a fate which two or more stages had met in the past. The interest of the driver did not cease at this point, however, for we still had three rivers to ford.

A Western steam that one day looks but a babbling trout brook, will, after a few hours' rain, become a foaming torrent. In the morning the stream may have been but fifty feet wide and one or two feet deep, and on that same evening after several hours' rain it will become a turbid river, varying from a hundred yards to a half-mile in width, and rushing like a mill race.

FORDING A WESTERN TORRENT.

The effect of this torrent is to make sharp, clean-cut banks, which change after every rain. This necessarily makes the approach very difficult and dangerous. The coach oftentimes has to go down a bank some twelve or fifteen feet high, at an angle of about sixty degrees. At the bottom of the bank there is often a sheer drop of from two to three feet, caused by the wash of the current.

On the night of our drive it had only been raining eight hours, but even this short time had made the rivers so deep that our horses had little more than their heads out of the water and with difficulty floundered through. The first river we crossed, the Ventura, once carried the six horse stage with the mails, driver and one passenger, completely out to sea. The passenger, being a good swimmer, managed to escape, but everything else was lost, including the driver. I myself once attempted to swim it on horseback. By good fortune my horse managed to get footing on the far side not a hundred yards from the quicksands, which border the ocean. I had been carried fully half a mile down stream, and a trifle further would have done for me.

The nerves of our driver on this night were so shaken that he gave up the route and small blame to him.

FRANCIS T. UNDERHILL.

At the Coaching Parade—Mr. August Belmont, Mr. R. W. Rives, Col. William Jay.

CLOISTER NEEDED REST.

How the Famous English Jumper Was Got into Condition to Win the Cardiff Steeplechase.

The English steeplechaser, Cloister, has well earned the reputation of being the best cross country performer of recent years. It is not surprising, therefore, that his victory in the Welsh Grand National Steeplechase, on Easter Monday, should have afforded a great deal of satisfaction to sportsmen everywhere. Since the sensational collapse of Cloister in his preparation for the Liverpool Grand National, in the Spring of 1894, the horse had been in charge of a number of trainers, some of whom were able to find out exactly what was the matter with him.

Finally, after all expert opinions had failed, the horse was turned out and given a complete rest. This—Nature's treatment—solved the difficulty, as it has so often done before. The horse's appetite returned and he began to pick up and gain strength. Under judicious care and work he grew strong and well, the result being that he was got into shape to win an important event. Commenting on his present condition, an English writer says:

"It does not, however, by any means follow from this, his latest success, that Cloister is as yet anything like the horse he was in 1893. He may or may not be brought back to that form later on, but it is as well to bear in mind that after winning the Sefton Steeplechase over three miles, in November of 1894, on much the same sort of preparation as he has recently undergone for the two and a half mile race at Cardiff, he went all to pieces when called upon to undergo the strain of a Grand National preparation in the following Spring.

"One thing is tolerably certain, and that is that if Cloister is ever again to win over Aintree, it will not be in heavy ground, but under conditions such as prevailed in the dry weather of 1893. A cast back to the various critical prognostications on the Grand National of that year discloses the fact that in more than one instance it was considered that Cloister had hardly undergone a sufficiently strong preparation to win a Grand National, which, no doubt, looking to what has happened since, was probably the very cause of his success. Mr. Arthur Yates always held him to be a horse who could not stand any great amount of strong work."

Giving him all possible credit, however, for his recent victory, most good judges will agree that, under the circumstances, it is doubtful if he would have had much chance in this year's Grand National. As to whether he may ever entirely regain his old time form, future training can alone determine. It would appear to be doubtful. Like many another good horse he has probably seen his best day.

QUEER TURF REFORMERS

Iconoclastic Australasians Who Desire to Bring About Needless Changes in Turf Laws.

Some iconoclastic members of the Victoria Racing Club, Australia, recently attempted to introduce drastic reforms in the management of the sport. The following changes in the rules and regulations were proposed:

"That all turf inquiries, of whatever kind, shall be open to the press. That horses shall be scratched before noon on the day preceding any race except in special races, such as incidents, sudden illness of a horse, or otherwise, when the bona-fide owner or owners of a horse shall publicly ask the stewards to extend the time for such scratching, should the reasons for asking for such late scratching be granted, and the public shall be informed of the reason thereof without delay.

"That no assumed name of an owner shall be allowed in any subscription or entry for any race or races held under the rules of the Victoria Racing Club. That no entry shall be accepted of any horse except such entry contains name or names of the bona-fide owner or owners thereof, and all such entries shall be published for public information, and the race cards issued to the public shall also notify such information."

It is gratifying to know that these suggestions received but little encouragement at the hands of the club, which, as well informed turfmen know, is one of the leading racing organizations of the world. Perhaps conditions prevail in Australia which Americans have long since outgrown. But in any event it is difficult to see how the adoption of any or all of these changes could benefit racing.

The suggestion that all turf inquiries be open to the press has been made in this country from time to time. That it would be impracticable, not to say injudicious, every one who gives the matter a moment's thought must admit. Nor does the recommendation as to assumed names appear to be of essential importance, especially as applied to racing here, as the Jockey Club permits the use of assumed names only when the bona-fide names of owners are duly registered.

The Australian reformers would seem to be quite on a par with others of like ilk elsewhere who find it much easier to tear down old established institutions than to erect new ones in their place.

Big Steeplechase Fields.

The Soarer's victory in the Grand National at Liverpool this year recalls the fact that not since 1873, Disturbance's year, has there been so many as twenty-eight runners in a Grand National field. Abd-el-Kader is the only chaser besides The Colonel, the winner in 1869 and 1870, who can claim the distinction of having won the event in two consecutive seasons. He was the winner in 1850 and 1851, and on the first of these two occasions beat the largest muster—thirty-six—that has ever come to the post for a Liverpool steeplechase. Salamander showed the way home in a field of thirty in 1869, while twenty-three ran in 1848, when Chandler, of traditional big jump fame, won. On the occasions when Matthew, Emigrant and Disturbance won, in the years 1847, 1857 and 1873, respectively, the field in each case numbered twenty-eight, the same as this year.

Captain T., the Inscrutable.

Our old friend Captain T., the star of "Father Bill" Daly's string, has bobbed up serenely early in the season, as, of course, it was expected he would. His eccentricities of in and out running have already attracted attention at Bennings. Captain T. and Little Tom were the low comedians, if the comparison be admissible, of last year's racing. A rivalry between them, which began at Aqueduct, culminated at Brighton Beach when both of them displayed what certain of the public considered to be rather extraordinary reversals of form. Daly is a skilful and astute horseman, and it is difficult to believe otherwise than that he may have winked at some of the misdeeds of Captain T. As a matter of fact, both the redoubtable Captain and the equally famous Little Tom presented many comical situations in their repeated encounters during the season. However, to continue the comparison, our choice team of mirth provokers has been broken up, as Mr. C. Baker disposed of Little Tom last Fall and his racing operations will probably be confined to the Western tracks this year. Still we shall no doubt continue to be amused by the idiosyncrasies of Daly's equine humorist.

OLD FRIENDS ARE THESE.

Familiar Types Lend Variety to Racing.

PECULIAR BUT PICTURESQUE.

Queer Characters That Are Always to Be Found on Lawn and Grand Stand of the Local Racecourses.

If you have never gone to a race track to study character, you have perhaps been often enjoined to do so. To the character student the race track always has been, always will be a sacred spot, if one may use the term. Where is the man, for instance, who cannot read another like a book? Or woman, for that matter. Observing folks all, each begins by studying character in his or her own way, each becomes a character in the eyes of others.

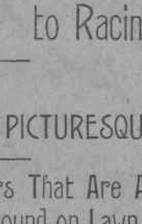
With to-morrow, say, when the racing season begins in this State, the great annual study begins, the class in "characteristics" is engrossed in the international pastime of character study, and, one by one, old characters, new characters, but ever interesting characters, appear before the diligent student. Be you a novice, then the few random vignettes which adorn this column will prepare you; a "regular," and you may ponder over them with sweet recollection.

Color attracts you first of all, and "a bit of a jockey" here portrayed, while of the "colored" persuasion, is a dazzling sight to behold, if not to be beholden to.

A Bit of a Jockey.

There is no law which compels him to strut about the the paddock each day attired in roseate regalia, but perhaps otherwise it might not be known that he was a jockey. He can recall with pleasure the year in which he secured his first mount. Consequently he does not frown upon hero worship; but then, who does? He is a harmless character, and he seems to enjoy it.

Quite a contrast is afforded by the artist's skilful delineation of "A Diamond in the Rough," a rare personage, perhaps, anywhere but at a racetrack. Because he wears his hat tilted carelessly back upon his head, this is no indication that he does not know better. No heart can be stronger than his, oftimes no bank roll, and his motto is "from $2 to $10,000." As proof that his brain is in a secure place. It may be noted that he wears iron-gray locks.



A Rough Diamond

With even greater assiduity than that with which the zealous young dry goods clerk constantly refers to "our firm" does the colored lad here portrayed refer to "mah hoss." The pride is pardonable in both instances. With our friend of the race track particularly the pride is inborn—never inculcated with a bale-stick. That the horse which he has fed, groomed, exercised, tried and found true should bring unto his master honor and financial gain certainly justifies him in indulging in a lordly grin while the halo of glory hovers over him. His one constant strong point, his appetite, is at a time like this overshadowed by his enthusiasm.

"Mah Hoss Won!"

To be at a race track and not to be "English" is not necessarily an infraction of the Penal Code, but to be English is to be the real thing. The character here depicted rises above the occasion, and there is no mistaking his calling or nationality. He looks stern enough to be either an oracle, a millionaire owner or a prosperous trainer, but the chances are that he is a groom.

Very English.

Next we have a type that may in half a dozen years be far more prominent numerically in the American racing world than at present; not an unimportant one, however, for your "jock o' the jumps" makes up in daring and weight over his brothers of the flat race what he may lack in poetic expression. His mounts during a season are occasionally not many, but when the cross country events become of as great a money value as the big races on the flat his triumph will be unbounded. This he knows, and is waiting for the day.

As to the visitors to the race track, perhaps none shines with so much effulgence as the very Parisian-looking gentleman here shown. He bets "all kinds of money," is easily excited, yet looks extremely happy after it's all over, win or lose. He parades before the grand stand constantly, not because there may be ladies seated there, but to keep the crease in his trousers well outlined.

From Paree.

Your casual half holiday character is more demonstrative. He is out for excitement with all its trimmings, and doesn't mind confiding from the lawn to some friend on the roof of the grand stand that he has "beaten every race so far." He comes with an air of buoyancy. He goes with an air of buoyancy. To be buoyant one must be light.

Saturday Afternoon.

It is during the progress of a race that the great study of character should best go on, but alas! it is equine character that then merits most of the attention. Keener than many, perhaps, is our gentleman friend of the anxious visage. He has had, perhaps, six separate tips of equally reliable calibre. Three of them have merited his attention one, two, three. Little wonder that he be keen. He is too old to be taken for a novice, but a sport that is always new makes novices of us all.

MAX.